

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of managing service requests from a first module acting as a client ~~module, to module~~ to a plurality of other modules acting as server modules, the method comprising:

receiving at an information-collating ~~module-receiving-module~~, from each of the other modules an indication of the operational status of each of the other modules, said operational status comprising the loading information associated with the modules;

at the first module, receiving at a control intermediary ~~receiving the first module~~, from the information-collating module an indication of the operational status of each of the other modules;

selecting by the control intermediary ~~selecting of~~ one of the other modules for directing a service request to based on the indications of operational status of the other ~~modules-modules~~; and

the control intermediary repeating the step of selecting one of the other modules for directing a service request to, so as to identify an alternative other module based on the loading information, in the event that the transmission of the service request to the selected module fails.

2. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, in which the first module comprises a client application and the control intermediary, the method comprising further comprising:

receiving at the control intermediary ~~receiving~~ a request for a Web service description from the client application, and selecting one of the other modules to direct the request to based on the indications of operational status of the other modules;

the control intermediary receiving the requested Web service description and substituting an identifier of the control intermediary into the description before passing the description to the client application.

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Currently Amended) A method of managing service requests from a first module acting as a client ~~module, to module to~~ a plurality of other modules acting as server modules, the first module comprising a client application and a control intermediary, the method comprising:

receiving at an information-collating ~~module-receiving-module,~~ from each of the other ~~modules-modules,~~ an indication of the operational status of each of the other modules, said operational status comprising the loading information associated with the modules;

receiving at the control intermediary ~~receiving-~~ from the information-collating module an indication of the operational status of each of the other modules;

receiving at the control intermediary ~~receiving-~~ a request for a Web service description from the client application, and selecting one of the other modules to direct the request to based on the indications of operational status of the other modules;

the control intermediary receiving the requested Web service description and substituting an identifier of the control intermediary into the description before passing the description to the client application; and

the control intermediary repeating the step of selecting one of the other modules for directing a service request to, so as to identify an alternative other module based on the loading information, in the event that the transmission of the service request to the selected module fails.

5. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 4, further ~~comprising,~~ comprising:

the control intermediary receiving a service request from the client application, and selecting one of the other modules to direct the request to based on the indications of the operational status of the other modules.

6. - 7. (Cancelled)

8. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, in which the control intermediary periodically polls the information-collating module to obtain the indications of the operational status of the other modules.

9. (Currently Amended) A system ~~comprising~~ comprising:

a first module acting as a client module and a plurality of other modules acting as server modules, in which the client module is arranged to send service requests to the other modules, the system further comprising:

an information-collating module arranged to receive ~~from each~~ from each of the other modules an indication of the operational status of the other modules, said operational status comprising the loading information associated with the modules; and

the client module comprising a control intermediary arranged to receive from the information-collating module an indication of the operational status of each of the other modules, and further arranged to select one of the other modules for directing a service request to based on the indications of operational status of the other ~~modules~~ modules; and

the control intermediary repeating the step of selecting one of the other modules for directing a service request to, so as to identify an alternative other module based on the loading information, in the event that the transmission of the service request to the selected module fails.

10. (Currently Amended) A system according to claim 9, the first module further ~~comprising a client comprising:~~

a client application,

the control intermediary being arranged to receive a request for a Web service description from the client application, and arranged to select one of the other modules to direct the request to based on the indications of operational status of the other modules;

the control intermediary being arranged to receive the requested Web service description and substitute an identifier of the control intermediary into the description before passing the description to the client application.

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Currently Amended) A system ~~comprising comprising:~~

a first module acting as a client module and a plurality of other modules acting as server modules,

the first module comprising a client application and a control intermediary, in which the client module is arranged to send service requests to the other modules,

the system further comprising:

an information-collating module arranged to receive from each of the other modules an indication of the operational status of the other modules, said operational status comprising the loading information associated with the modules;

the control intermediary being arranged to receive from the information-collating module an indication of the operational status of each of the other modules;

the control intermediary being further arranged to receive a request for a Web service description from the client application, and to select one of the other modules for directing a service request to based on the indications of operational status of the other ~~modules; and~~ modules;

the control intermediary being arranged to receive the requested Web service description and substitute an identifier of the control intermediary into the description before passing the description to the client ~~application.~~ application; and

wherein the control intermediary is further arranged to repeat the step of selecting one of the other modules for directing a service request to, so as to identify an alternative other module, in the event that the transmission of the service request to the selected module fails.

13. (Currently Amended) A system according to claim 12, the control intermediary being further arranged to receive a service request from the client application, and to select one of the other modules to direct the request to based on the indications of the operational status of the other modules.

14. - 15. (Cancelled)

16. (Previously Presented) A system according to claim 9, in which the control intermediary is further arranged to periodically poll the information-collating module to obtain the indications of the operational status of the other modules.

17. (Previously Presented) A system according to claim 9, in which the other modules are Web service servers.

18. (Previously Presented) A storage medium carrying computer readable code representing instructions for causing processors to perform the method according to claim 1 when the instructions are executed by the processors.

19. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium containing computer program ~~comprising~~ instructions for causing processors to perform the method according to claim 1 when the instructions are executed by the processors.

20. (Cancelled)

21. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium carrying computer readable code representing instructions for causing processors to operate as the system according to claim 9 when the instructions are executed by the processors.

22. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium containing computer program ~~comprising~~ instructions for causing processors to operate as the system according to ~~claim 9~~ claim 12 when the instructions are executed by the processors.

23. (Cancelled)